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GUEST EDITORIAL

Why Not in Torrance?

(Today's Guest Editorial was written by J. B. Mosley in rebuttal to a letter from F. A. Lincoln. Mr. Lincoln questioned the need for a new civic auditorium. Mr. Mosley is chairman of the Citizens Auditorium Advisory Committee, a group appointed by the City Council to evaluate a recent survey conducted by Economics Research Associates and to make recommendations on the proposed auditorium complex to the Council.)

By J. B. MOSLEY

Chairman, Auditorium Advisory Committee

Mr. Lincoln's letter makes so many incorrect statements I feel I must quote the facts.

First, the survey that was made by Economics Research Associates that he claims cost "\$25,000 or more" and which he says the committee did not like, did not cost \$25,000. It cost \$15,000. The committee did like the report; it was highly pleased with it. The survey was excellently prepared and showed that a great deal of research went into its preparation. It was prepared by a firm that rates tops in its field.

The citizens of Torrance should be thankful that city officials had the good business sense to order the survey. They wanted the correct answer and they went to the correct place to get it—to the experts.

As for the City of Torrance engineers making their own survey, the staff of the city manager's office did make a survey; a good one, too. But city staffs are not built for research of the nature required by this project nor do they have the time to devote to a project that requires the extra time that would be needed for a subject of this nature. In spite of this, the city manager's office compiled a report from seven major architectural firms in the Los Angeles area. These firms contributed thousands of dollars in man hours to make these presentations to the city.

In regard to the statement, "Every high school has an auditorium." Only one high school in Torrance has a real auditorium. This is Torrance High and it was built in the 1930s. There is much disagreement among the experts as to the quality of this building by modern standards. After all, it was built more than 30 years ago. It has few dressing rooms and very limited storage facilities. Further, it has very inadequate parking space for large gatherings. As for the other schools, I believe if one will take the time to investigate, he will find that other schools combine their auditoriums, cafeterias and gymnasiums into multiple use facilities. These are fine for the purposes for which they were designed, but not suited for many public gatherings.

The Torrance Unified School District must hold its high school graduations outside because they lack a facility large enough to accommodate the gathering. Each of the four high schools attracts 3,000 or more persons to annual graduation ceremonies. None of the high schools can accommodate more than 600 persons in their assembly facilities. According to school officials, outdoor high school graduations have been at the mercy of cool weather and the comfort of the audience has been a problem for years.

Other facts from the ERA Report include these: There is no place in Torrance for a dinner gathering of more than 350 persons. This has resulted in some Torrance organizations going out of Torrance to hold annual dinners and other functions. There is no public gathering place in Torrance for more than 937 persons. This is Torrance High, a building which is 30 years old.

The auditorium which the city disposed of in downtown Torrance a few years ago was so out of date and obsolete it was useless as an auditorium. It was built in 1936 or 1937.

A committee of nearly two dozen civic-minded citizens was appointed to examine the auditorium question for Torrance. It met twice a month for nearly a year and studied the question diligently. Members made field trips to other auditoriums, studied the report by the city staff, studied the report by ERA, and heard presentations from many major architects in the year. The committee used the ERA survey as a starting point for its deliberations. The committee found the survey a great help and agreed with the findings in most cases.

The only major difference was in the area of size. The committee did not feel that ERA gave enough consideration to the population growth of Torrance. The site facility recommended by ERA would only duplicate some school facilities already available. In short, it would not relieve the shortage of assembly facilities that now exists not only in Torrance but in the entire South Bay area.

Torrance is the geographic and population center of the South Bay and by 1980 the population of this area will be more than one million people. Torrance's civic center is not just the location of city hall and the police station. It is a center for county government services as well. The county court house, probation office, and municipal court, and other facilities planned make this area a sub-county seat for governmental services for all the South Bay.

Torrance, as the largest and fastest growing city in the South Bay, should assume the leadership in the area and provide facilities for cultural programs, entertainment, and assemblies befitting the third city in size in the county. If Torrance does not grasp the opportunity, some other city in the area will provide the facilities and Torrance will be the loser.

Where people go they spend and when money is spent, taxes are collected by someone. Why not Torrance? Other cities feel that auditorium rentals are the smallest benefit received by a city with an auditorium. Out-of-town guests to an auditorium function are estimated to spend a minimum of \$10 to \$15 in the city.

See! Always Impossible Conditions!



DISTRICT ATTORNEY REPORTS

Spanish-Speaking Men Join Younger's Office

By EVELLE J. YOUNGER

Los Angeles County

Among our newly-hired investigators are three who can say "Feliz Año Nuevo" as easily as "Happy New Year," and that is a nice thing. But the joy of speaking two languages with equal facility is less important than its usefulness. We have tried to make that plain.

And yet, as the dialogue grows on the subject of communication between law enforcement and ordinary citizens, a misconception appears to be growing with it. Because understanding promotes mutual respect, there are those who seem to feel that law enforcement is seeking public favor for its own sake.

We don't deny that we're pleased when people hold our office in high esteem. And we are happy if the Spanish-speaking community does so. But that is far from the chief motive for hiring men like Jesus Gonzales of South San Gabriel and Bob Trigon of Whittier and Santos Ornelas of San Pedro. Or our other Spanish-speaking investigators (Bill Herrera of Pomona, Hank Perales of Montebello, Jess Gomez of El Monte, and Dave Correa of Alhambra) or the many other bilingual persons in the District Attorney's office.

The significant thing is that men of this sort serve an urgent need. When communication breaks down there are wars or neighborhood fights or bloody riots on the streets.

Looked at another way, there is the question of what our citizens have a right to expect. It is a basic precept of law that everybody involved with it must know exactly what is at stake. We have no right, for example, to suppose a citizen will understand esoteric legal terminology. It is our job to use phrasing he does understand. So too, we can't expect somebody who has

come from a foreign country as an adult to speak English like a native. We must talk to him in the language he understands best.

The question is, then, how well are the objectives of law enforcement understood?

We have in Los Angeles County the best peace officers in the nation. They are not perfect, of course. Watts furnished evidence this summer of some weaknesses. But certainly they have not earned the savagely bitter attacks leveled from some quarters.

At the base of the problem lay misunderstanding. If I may repeat what I told the McCone Commission: "The fact that law enforcement may deserve support and respect is of no consequence unless all segments of the community know it. We must make certain people do know. We must communicate."

Communication is a vital tool. Law enforcement cannot function without it. That is why we have enlarged our staff of Spanish-speaking personnel.

Although the requested addition of twelve welfare fraud investigators to the seven now on our staff would enlarge the county payroll, it could dramatically save taxpayers dollars. But the arithmetic may not be immediately obvious to everybody.

It is not merely a matter of checking on those who cheat. Even with these new men, we could not probe a single additional case, nor investigate one a whit more thoroughly. But we could get at the job quicker—and that is the point.

"As time passes," I wrote the Board of Supervisors, "investigation becomes more difficult."

After a delay of several months the likelihood of getting a conviction in court does not merely recede; it becomes highly remote. It

can evaporate altogether. There is a statute of limitations. In one year to three, depending on how much money is involved, a case that has not been tried will be wiped off the books automatically. This is scarcely the way to discourage other persons who may be tempted to commit similar crimes.

We now have a backlog of more than 500 welfare cases, and the 1965 flow ran about 170 per cent higher than the preceding two-year average. To ease this burden we have transferred men from other assignments; but obviously this device will not work indefinitely. In the end the only way out is to hire more investigators. The cost, in our view, could save hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Despite higher salaries and better prospects for young lawyers in the county service, there is still a problem keeping the District Attorney's office fully staffed with top-quality personnel.

Arrangements have been made so far to add 17 new deputies to the staff in January. Eight of them proved their abilities by serving apprenticeships in our office as junior law clerks. But resignations and retirements are always with us, and already we are confronted with six or seven unfilled spots.

WILLIAM HOGAN

Young Berkeley Writer Pens Korean War Novel

A young Berkeley writer, Edward Franklin, has come up with a short, impressive first novel titled "It's Cold in Pongo-Ni." The manuscript won a Phelan Award, and I am not surprised. For this powerful and sardonic narrative of a Marine patrol on a night raid during the Korean conflict is in the best tradition of describing military action. Offhand, I think of Stephen Crane, John Hersey of "Into the Valley," James Jones and Hemingway.

Such comparisons are dangerous, if not meaningless, for I do not suggest that Franklin is aping any of these older hands. He applies his own spare, emphatic style to create a memorable series of vignettes both before and during this isolated action on a cold, bloody nerve-wracking and fundamentally senseless maneuver. While we meet some standard military types here, the econ-

HERB CAEN SAYS:

Crosby Runs for Cover As the Sky Rains Birds

CAENFETTI: Barnaby Conrad is up to his hips in honkers. Hunting with Bing (who else) at Rising River, he nailed three geese with one shotgun blast as Crosby ran for cover, hollering "It's raining birds!" . . . News item: "The most-used public pay phone in the entire Pacific area is on the ground floor of Harold's Club in Reno." And we know what the most-used message from that phone is, too: "Send money!" . . . Wurrurra, the talk in high TV circles goes that H. L. Hunt, the Texas right-wing fountain-head, is trying to move in on CBS via stock purchases to him it's the Communist Broadcasting System. . . . Bruce Reeves, 24, must be Oakland's hottest young writer since Jack London. His first novel, "Where's the Action," has been bought by the movies for \$150,000 cool cash.

CONVERSATION STARTER: The \$10,000 bill is the only one with the dollar sign on it. Since you'll probably never see one, take my word for it. . . . Conversation crushers: The "GTO" on Pontiacs means "Gran Turismo Omologata," which 11 out of 10 GTO drivers can't translate (neither can nine out of 10 Pontiac dealers, but the tenth translates "omologata" as "proved" . . . The reason ostriches have trouble getting off the ground is that they eat 25 lbs. of food a day (support your Zoo Society).

NOW THEN: Additional proof, if needed, that the readers always know more than the writers. A few columns ago, in a misguided whim of fitsy I noted that

"elephants' stomachs rumble constantly — a phenomenon known as barbarygms," and I could get myself off the hook by blaming that on the printers. Actually, they're only half to blame. I wrote "barbarygms," when it should have been borborrygmus — as attested to by a flood of letters from doctors, lawyers, merchants and thieves. Furthermore, borborrygmus — "the noise made by the flatus of the bowels" — is not confined to elephants. The human stomach rumbles, too, especially when empty, but not as loudly as the elephant's. When you're at a fancy dinner party, and your stomach is heard from, simply say "pardon my borborrygmus." Rude but intelligent, that's the thing to be.

Among my learned correspondents, by the way, was Paul Ogden, who notes "The late Edgar Varese was working on a Contrapuntal Gigue for Borborrygmus, Fife and Ukulele at the time of his death" — and a great loss, too. As for the ridiculous word "barbarygms" that appeared in the column, incomplete research indicates that it was a disease of the mouth caused by drinking out of dirty glasses on the old Barbary Coast.

Happy borborrygmus to you all.

INNOCENCE is expecting to find supper served in a supper club, breakfast at a breakfast club, a key club that really requires a key, and clam chowder that is mostly clams. . . . Maturity is the certain knowledge that your blue shirt will fade to exactly the right shade in the same washing that will

fray its collar. . . . Adolescence is expecting that any politician elected to office will do something better than his predecessor; maturity is hoping that he won't do anything worse; cynicism is not bothering to vote because they're all a pack of thieves anyway. . . . Maturity is the comfortable realization that James Bond wears a toupee.

And now, Ma, can I go out and play with the other kids?

YES, A cold man, Somerset Maugham, but he tries to explain: "My soul would have been quite different if I had not stammered, or if I had been four or five inches taller. I am slightly prognathous. In my childhood, they did not know that this could be remedied by a gold band worn while the jaw is still malleable. If they had, my countenance would have borne a different cast, the reaction toward me would have been different, and therefore, my attitude toward people would have been different, too."

VISITING HERE is Meyers Cornelius of Oklahoma City, who was a combat photographer with the Fifth Marine Div. on Iwo Jima during W'War II. Shortly after the landing, he was at the bottom of Mt. Suribachi when along came AP Photographer Joe Rosenthal. "Don't climb that hill," advised Cornelius, who already had. "There's nothing up there, man." Rosenthal went anyway and came down with the classic photo of the war — the flag-raising shot — and you know what? Cornelius STILL has a funny look on his face.

ROYCE BRIER

Maugham: He Had Only Talent to Tell Stories

Within the past year Somerset Maugham said: "When I die I know that most people will say, 'Hell, I thought he died long ago.'" So when he died, aged 91, that is exactly what most people said. For Maugham had what may be called an "era sense," and he knew the era that produced him and impelled his kind of writing is forever gone.

Today, most literate people of middle age or better know the story of Sadie Thompson, and even the young may know "Of Human Bondage." But they have known this chiefly from film, and a very large number would not identify a man named Maugham as the author.

When he was 60, Maugham was aware of himself as a figure in a closing era. He gave thought to, though badly miscalculated, his impending death, in his Mediterranean villa he was an avid reader of the London Times, and he said he was impressed in scanning the obituaries that his friends were all dying, and they were all in their 60s. Therefore, he said sardonically, he was ready.

He was old before his time, possibly because he was very rich, and preferred the indulgence he could afford to the hard discipline of writing.

Anyway, he confined himself to an occasional essay,

in which he retained his lucid style, and to interviews. These interviews did not sparkle, as did Shaw's at comparable age, but they were amusing and wise. He enjoyed telling young writers how to write, knowing this was impossible.

Maugham's only possible bequest to young writers was his own work.

He was not a great writer, like Dickens, because he did not have the Dickensian gift for creating another world than ours, yet peopled with human beings. Though many of his stories were laid in the Conrad region, the East, he lacked Conrad's sensuous description of faraway places and moods. Nor was he much interested in the tortured and subtle psychological exploration which marked another contemporary, Henry James.

What Maugham had was a superlative talent for telling a story, short or long, which simply fixed the reader's interest.

It is a little hard to say why his stories almost always come off, why they convince you his characters really lived and went through the experiences he is recounting.

Perhaps dialogue is the secret. Realistic dialogue is one of the most difficult arts in fiction. If you care to read "The Painted Veil," you will find this strikingly illustrated. Here was a book published in 1925, written by an Englishman who in earlier years wrote brittle comedies for the London stage. Any modern American is far removed from this milieu. Yet if you read Veil's dialogue, you say: "Why, given the time and place, that is the way those people must think and talk!"

This is indeed a little miraculous, and possibly it was all Somerset Maugham could ever say to a young writer who hopes his characters will have more than a papery life.

Morning Report:

The income tax is worked backwards in Italy. Over there, the collector announces publicly what people make and it's up to the taxpayer to prove how poor he is. Here, we tell the Government how poor we are and the agents prove that this financial modesty does not become us.

First up in Rome the other day was Movie Star Sophia Loren. The collector said she drew down \$560,000 in 1965. Miss Loren was amazed, dumfounded, and surprised. How did the government ever get such an idea?

I know where. The Italian tax collector reads the handouts from the movie press agents and believes them. The stars also like to believe until, of course, it's tax time again.

Abe Mellinkoff